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Marianist Sisters

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NEWS



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Friday May 20, 2016

Marianist Sisters

The University of Dayton will mark the 200th anniversary of the Marianist sisters with Mass and a reception on Wednesday, May 25.

Mass will be celebrated at 12:30 p.m. in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception with a reception to follow at 1:15 p.m. in the Kennedy Union Torch Lounge, highlighted by a proclamation from the Montgomery County Commissioners.

The **Society of Mary** (Marianists), a worldwide family of Catholic brothers, priests, sisters and committed lay people, founded the University of Dayton campus in 1850 and their focus on community and social justice continues to guide the University's mission.

The Marianist sisters, formally known as the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (F.M.I.), trace their origin to the aftermath of the French revolution. Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon left an aristocratic life to found this first vowed religious branch of the Marianist family in Agen, France, from an association of young women. The Blessed William Joseph Chaminade similarly founded the Society of Mary with brothers and priests a year later among lay communities in Bordeaux.

Today, Marianist Sisters live and work on five continents and in 14 countries. In Dayton, their service through local schools, parishes and nonprofits has enhanced the education, spiritual and social development of thousands of children and adults.

“Our Marianist founders’ vision for rebuilding society and church through a network of dynamic and engaged faith communities is as applicable today as it was 200 years ago,” said Sister Leanne Jablonski, director of the Marianist Environmental Education Center at Mount St. John and Hanley Sustainability Institute scholar-in-residence for faith and environment.

“Marianist sisters today live Adele's spirit by collaborating with our other Marianist branches and with other organizations to address justice concerns, including the needs of women, children, the environment, and those in poverty. In Pope Francis’ spirit of hope, mercy and care, we are joyfully building a church and world where no one is left out.”

At least one sister has been active on the University campus since 1962, when the University opened the Marycrest residence facility. Some years as many as four or five sisters have been involved in campus ministry, served on the faculty, focused on community outreach and education or worked in the Marian Library.

Among the places they have served in the Dayton community include: Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School, the Dakota Center, St. Albert the Great Catholic School, Ascension Catholic School, We Care Arts, the Marianist Environmental Education Center and the North American Center for Marianist Studies. International sisters also come to the University for the intensive English program.

“We focus on living Mary’s mission in whatever way we are called,” said Sister Laura Leming, associate professor of sociology. “We take seriously Father Chaminade’s focus on Mary’s saying, ‘Do whatever He tells you.’ We’re educators in faith and we build community wherever we are, whether as teachers, religious educators, social workers, or building health care centers in India and Africa.”

The sisters will open a new mission in Malawi this fall in honor of their bicentenary. The Marianist family will continue international celebrations through 2018, including events to mark the bicentennial of the founding of the Society of Mary on Oct. 2, 1817, and the Feast of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade on Jan. 22, 2018.

More information on the University's Marianist identity is available on the [University's website](#).

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